

23. (ORIGINAL) The article of claim 22 wherein said compound is selected from carbides, oxides, nitrides and carbonitrides.
24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 23 wherein said ~~outer~~ layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound.
25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 24 wherein said ~~compounds~~ ~~are compound~~ is nitrides.
26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 24 wherein said ~~strike~~ layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.
27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 25 wherein said ~~strike~~ layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.
28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 22, wherein said ~~faucet~~-substrate is copper, steel, brass, zinc, aluminum or nickel.
29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 22, wherein said ~~faucet~~-substrate is aluminum or zinc.
30. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 22, wherein said strike layer has a thickness between 0.25 millionths of an inch and 50 millionths of an inch.
31. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 22, wherein said ~~outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound~~ has a thickness between 0.1 millionths of an inch and 30 millionths of an inch.

32. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An article having a coating on at least a portion of a surface of said article, said article comprising:

a substrate consisting essentially of zinc or aluminum; and

a nickel layer;

~~a coating on said substrate, said coating including a strike layer directly contacting said surface of said substrate and~~ consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy directly contacting said nickel layer and having a thickness less than 15 millionths of an inch[.]; and

~~an outer[[a]] layer directly contacting said strike layer and~~ consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound, or zirconium-titanium alloy compound directly contacting said strike layer.

33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said compound is selected from carbides, oxides, nitrides and carbonitrides.

34. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 33 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound, or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound.

35. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 34 wherein said ~~compounds~~ are compound is nitrides.

36. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 34 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.

37 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 35 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.

38. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 32, wherein ~~said substrate~~the article is a faucet.
39. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 32, wherein ~~said substrate~~the article is a doorknob.
40. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 32 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound has a thickness between 0.1 millionths of an inch and 30 millionths of an inch.
41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said strike layer has a thickness greater than 0.25 millionths of an inch.
42. (NEW) The article of claim 22 wherein the article is a faucet.
43. (NEW) The article of claim 22 wherein the article is a doorknob.
44. (NEW) The article of claim 24 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium-titanium alloy compound.
45. (NEW) The article of claim 22 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of titanium compound.
46. (NEW) The article of claim 23 wherein said compound is oxides.
47. (NEW) The article of claim 22 wherein said nickel layer directly contacts the surface of the article.

48. (NEW) The article of claim 34 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium-titanium alloy compound.
49. (NEW) The article of claim 32 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.
50. (NEW) The article of claim 49 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound.
51. (NEW) The article of claim 32 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of titanium compound.
52. (NEW) The article of claim 33 wherein said compound is oxides.
53. (NEW) The article of claim 32 wherein said nickel layer directly contacts the substrate.
54. (NEW) The article of claim 32 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound, or zirconium-titanium alloy compound is uncoated.